

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1785

By Pody

A RESOLUTION to honor the congregation of Auburn Baptist Church on the celebration of the church's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

WHEREAS, we are pleased to recognize those historic churches and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, one such dynamic and historic community of faith is Auburn Baptist Church, whose members have worked to improve the quality of both spiritual and temporal life in Tennessee for the past 200 years; and

WHEREAS, Auburn Baptist Church was organized by Elder John Fite in 1822, before the village of Auburn came into existence, as an offshoot of Smith Fork Baptist Church near Statesville; and

WHEREAS, the church was originally established as Sander's Fork Baptist Church, with ninety-four charter members and John Fite serving as the first pastor; in 1869, several years after moving to its present home in Auburntown, the church was renamed Auburn Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, after weathering the Civil War and the turbulence of the Reconstruction Era, Auburn Baptist Church dedicated its third church building in 1909; this structure was maintained until a new, three-story educational building was completed in 1949; and

WHEREAS, using lumber salvaged from the demolition of the church's auditorium, a new pastorium was built in 1952; and

WHEREAS, construction of Auburn Baptist Church's present sanctuary was completed in August 1959, with the first worship service held on June 5, 1960; and

WHEREAS, throughout its illustrious 200-year history, Auburn Baptist Church has been blessed with a number of exceptional pastors; during the church's first century, their number includes Elder John Fite, Elder H.W. Pickette, Elder E.W. Haile, Elder John Harris, Elder Samuel C. Odom, Elder J.M.D. Cates, Elder A.J. Brandon, Elder J.J. Martin, Elder J.H. Jackson, Elder D.B. Vance, Elder John T. Oakley, Elder G.A. Ogle, Rev. W.C. McPherson, Rev. S.M. Gupton, Rev. M.E. Ward, and Rev. R.P. McPherson; and

WHEREAS, pastors serving from 1922 until the present day include Rev. E.L. Atwood, Rev. S.P. DeVault, Rev. W.C. McPherson, Rev. Floyd T. Carroll, Rev. Cannie W. Leonard, Rev. H.R. Anderson, Rev. Dewey Robinson, Rev. Wallace Owen, Rev. Finis L. Fuller, Rev. Kendreth Holt, Rev. Kenneth Boster, Rev. Milford B. Cox, Rev. J.E. Mayfield, Rev. Edward Wood, Rev. Willard Thrasher, Rev. Robert Powers, Rev. Tommy Presley, Rev. Ric Lee, Rev. Jerry Osborne, and Rev. Larry Thomas, who has served with compassion and conviction as the church's spiritual leader since 2017; and

WHEREAS, Auburn Baptist Church has stood on the rock-solid foundation of Christian belief, service, and love for 200 years, serving as a bastion of faith and outreach to the people of its community; and

WHEREAS, Auburn Baptist Church is truly one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our State and nation, and the members of this exceptional congregation should be appropriately honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Auburn Baptist Church on the occasion of its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary and extend to this exceptional congregation our best wishes for much continued success in performing God's work.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.